EMBALMING

DRAWER 15

DEATH

71.2009.085.02649

# The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln

## Embalming

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the

Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

71 2009.085.02649

CORPSE

THE PRESIDENT'S REMAINS in the course of Saturday, were removed to the White House. The body was dressed in the suit of plain black worn by him on the occasion of his last inauguration. Upon his pillow and over the breast of the corpse were scattered white flowers and green leaves, offerings of affection. It was proposed to remove the discoloration from the face by chemical process, but the Secretary of War insisted that that was a part of the history of the event, and it should be allowed to remain as an evidence to the thousands who would view the body when it shall be laid in state, of the death which this martyr to his ideas of justice and right had suffered.

1865

No banner or date.

## THE REPORT ON LINCOLN'S AUTOPSY.

From The Washinton Post.

One of the assistants to Chief Clerk Sylvester, of the Metropolitan Police Department, is Mr. Harry P. Cattell, who has charge of the property room. In his younger days Mr. Cattell was an embalmer, and at the time of President Lincoln's assassination he was in the employ of Brown & Alexander, embalmers, who had their establishment on Pennsylvania-ave., near Eleventh-st., Northwest. On Saturday morning, April 15, a few hours after the death of the President, Mr. Cattell was directed by his employers to go to the Executive Mansion and embalm the body. It was 9 o'clock in the morning when he reached there with his instruments and embalming fluid and proceeded to work.

It is nearly thirty years ago since the assassination, which excited profound horror in all civilized portions of the globe, and while every reader knows how the beloved Chief Executive met his death, comparatively few people of this generation know just where the fatal bullet entered his body or what course it took. Mr. Cattell showed a "Post" reporter a verbatim copy of the original autopsy report, written by an assistant to Surgeon-General Barnes, who made the autopsy. The following is an exact copy of it:

"Yesterday Surgeon-General Barnes, assisted by Drs. Stone, the late President's family physician; Curtis, Woodward, Crane, Tafft, and other eminent medical men, made an autopsy in the presence of President Johnson, General Augur and General Rucker. The external appearance of the face of the President presented a deep black stain around both eyes. The fatal wound was on the left side of the head, behind and in a line with and three inches from the left ear. The course of the ball was obliquely forward toward the right eye, crossing the brain in an oblique manner and lodging a few inches behind that eye. In the track of the wound were found fragments of bone, which had been driven forward by the ball, which was embedded in the anterior lobe of the left hemisphere of the brain. The orbit plates of both eyes were the seat of communicated fracture, and the eyes were filled with extravasated blood. The serious injury of the orbit plates was due to the centre-coup, the result of the intense shock of so large a projectile fired so closely to the head. The ball was evidently a Derringer, hand-cast, and from which the neck had been clipped. A shaving of lead had been removed from the ball in its passage through the bones of the skull and was found in the orifice of the wound. The first fragment of bone was found two and one-half inches within the brain; the second and larger fragment about four inches from the orifice of the wound. The ball lay still further in advance. The wound was about one-half inch in diameter. The autopsy fully confirmed the opinion of the surgeons on the night of the assassination that the wound was mortal.

"Yesterday morning Drs. Brown and Alexander were sent for to embalm the body of President Lincoln. The embalming process was performed by Mr. Harry P. Cattell, an employe of the above-mentioned firm, who also embalmed little Willie Lincoln, son of the President, in February, 1862. The body was embalmed in the late President's own bedroom in the west wing of the Executive Mansion, fronting on Pennsylvania-ave. Among those in attendance during the process were Vice-President Johnson, General Augur, General Rucker and the attending physicians of the lamented deceased."

METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

~~First Precinct Station~~

Washington, D. C., June 11, 1909

E. St. Clair Thompson, Esq.,

Dear Sir and Bro.;

In reply to your suggestions as to my past life I offer the following:

Was born Sept. 7, 1838 at Blackwoodtown, Camden Co. N. J.

Name of father, Samuel J. Cattell, born in Gloucester Co., N. J.

Name of mother, Catharine Pratt, born in Camden Co. N. J.

Occupation of father; owner and Captain of a sailing vessel engaged in the merchant marine service.

Attended the public schools until 12 years of age at Blackwoodtown, N. J. after which I was engaged in various pursuits until April 26, 1861, when I enlisted in Co. F, 20th Reg. Pa. Vol. Inf. (Scott Legion Reg.) and served until discharged on account of expiration of term of enlistment.

At the close of the war learned the trade of lithographing and worked at same until Sept. 21, 1877 when I became a member of the Met. Police Force, D. C., of which I am still an active member.

Was married in the year 1858. Wife died in August 1884.

Form 415—2 M—5-4-'09. 11085-'09.

METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

~~First Precinct Station~~

Washington, D. C., 190

Have six children living, five daughters and one son.

Fix this up to suit yourself and if there is anything further you wish to know notify me and I will try to furnish the information.

Yours Respectfully,

H. P. Bartell

2300, 18th St. N.W.

## HENRY P. CATTELL DEAD.

Dec. 8-1915

### Was a Retired Member of the Police Department.

Henry P. Cattell, a retired member of the police department, died at his home at the Madrid this morning about 11 o'clock. Arrangements for his funeral have not been completed.

Mr. Cattell, who was a native of New Jersey, was born September 7, 1838, and was appointed a member of the police force September 17, 1883. He served as station clerk in several precincts and later was placed in charge of the property room at headquarters, where he handled thousands of dollars' worth of lost, stolen and abandoned property.

A number of years ago he did duty at the Baltimore and Potomac depot, and his last assignment was at Union station, where he was in charge of the police room. He was retired from the force March 1, 1912.

Mr. Cattell is survived by five daughters and one son. His daughters are Miss Fannie Cattell, Mrs. F. J. Mersheimer, Mrs. William Barclay and Mrs. Elizabeth Wood of this city and Mrs. Harry Ritner, Rocky Mount, N. C. The son is William Cattell, who is in the Philippines in the service of the Agricultural Department.



# New Light on the Embalming of President Lincoln

from Dodge Chemical Co Publication

★

## "AS I SEE IT" . . . By Seabury Quinn

FROM TIME immemorial it has been the tendency of every one who es business with the Government to arge all the traffic will bear—and en a little more, if such a course ms possible. So that when we find instance of business or professional en deliberately *restrained* in their arges for work to be paid for out of blic funds, we are wont to pause d catch our breath in admiring as-ishment.

How many instances of that kind uld be adduced, there is no way of owing. But we do know that credit an historic example of such prac- belongs to the Funeral Profession. The story, in itself, is of decided ckground" interest to anyone en-ged in Funeral Service; and espe-lly so since the facts come to light m the official records of almost hty years ago.

n the first place, this is a belated oute to the men who embalmed the ly of *Abraham Lincoln*. In the sec-l place, it is a reference to a matter ich has much practical bearing on affairs of the Profession today—*tomorrow!*

The man who actually embalmed President was *Harry P. Cattell*, an ployee of the firm of Alexander & wn. Beyond that fact, we know e of the man. The Washington y Directory for 1865 tells us that he d somewhere on "C Street South," that he was an "embalmer of the d" by profession.

he "*National Intelligencer*," (then capital's leading newspaper), in its e for April 16, 1865, says that "Drs. wn and Alexander were summoned embalm the body of Mr. Lincoln, operation being performed by Har-P. Cattell . . . who had also em-ned the body of Willie Lincoln in 3."

★

THE results of Embalmer Cattell's k, we find in the "National Intel-ncer" for the following day, (April 17, 1865), that "*The President's face was exceedingly natural, with a slight smile on the features.*"

Unwittingly, perhaps—but nevertheless most clearly!—the newspaper paid Mr. Cattell the highest technical tribute. For his task was one which might well give pause to a thoroughly trained and well-equipped Embalmer of our own time. Consider these technical facts:

The bullet fired by John Wilkes Booth was about the size and shape of a small marble. It had pierced the left occiput, in line with and three inches to the right of the left ear. It had driven obliquely forward, lodging about three inches under the right eye. A portion of the missile had chipped off while crashing through the skull; and this, together with two fragments of bone, was lodged in the brain, directly behind the wound. Both eyes were heavily discolored by extravasated blood, and the area of ecchymosis extended down the cheeks and along the nose. Rendering these conditions still more difficult, some Army Surgeons had performed a far reaching autopsy. The brain had been removed and the circulation to the head had been almost if not totally destroyed.

The conditions would present something of a task for a modern Operator, equipped with all our knowledge and facilities of 1943. Yet we have the report of an eye witness, writing in the leading newspaper of the day, that "*The President's face looked exceedingly natural.*"

EDITOR'S NOTE: Without in any way detracting from the remarkable results achieved by Mr. Cattell's historic work, it should be noted that the comparison with modern-day Embalming is not chemically exact. For, at the time of Mr. Lincoln's death, the use of arsenical chemicals was legally permissible; and those chemicals were undoubtedly used by Mr. Cattell. If any Embalmer used arsenical preservatives to-day, he would, of course, be guilty of a serious offence, and would doubtless lose his license.

Whether Mr. Cattell received any special compensation from his employers, we do not know. The War Department's files disclose simply that the following bill was rendered by Brown & Alexander:

"TO embalming remains of Abraham Lincoln, lately President of The United States - - - $100.00
TO 16 days' services for self and assistant, at $10 per day - - - $160.00"

Whether the "self" mentioned in the bill was Dr. Brown or Dr. Alexander does not appear. All we know is that the "assistant" was Harry P. Cattell.

★

IT IS worth noting that this firm of Brown & Alexander is listed in the Washington City Directory for 1865 as follows: "*Charles D. Brown, M.D., and Joseph B. Alexander, M.D., embalmers and surgeons, 323 D North.*"

(Continued on page 41)



SEABURY QUINN

Distinguished Lawyer and Writer on Funeral Service

# THE EMBALMING OF MR. LINCOLN

(Continued from page 5)

Embalming, as we know it today, was then just beginning to attract public notice. Dr. Thomas Holmes of Brooklyn, New York, had been engaged in experiments in preserving the human body with injections of arsenical mixtures into the arteries, and had achieved considerable success.

With the outbreak of the Civil War, he had been commissioned to go to Washington and prepare the bodies of officers and soldiers dying in hospitals or killed in battle while serving with the Army of the Potomac. His practice had increased so rapidly that he determined to establish permanent offices in Washington. While he lived there, he imparted knowledge of his technique to several Funeral Directors and Physicians.

My friend, Archer L. Haycock, manager of the hundred-year-old establishment of Joseph Birch's Sons, has shown me a portrait of Dr. Holmes, presented by him to Joseph Birch while he was living at his house as a guest and, incidentally, making use of his establishment as a class-room for his students.

☆

AS A matter of interest, I have made some search in an effort to find out whether Mr. Cattell had been a student of Dr. Holmes . . . or whether Dr. Brown or Dr. Alexander, or both, had learned the art from the Civil War Embalmer and then passed on the knowledge to their "assistant". But, of this, there seems to be no record.

In collaboration with *Frank T. Sands*, "undertaker", the Messrs. M. F. & G. W. Harvey, (also "undertakers"), were busy designing and making a coffin while Harry P. Cattell was engaged in his professional work. This "coffin", (it was not a casket), was as typical of its day as Mr. Cattell's work was in advance of it.

According to the Washington *"Evening Star"* for April 17, 1865, this coffin was *"a magnificent coffin, indeed, costing above $1000 . . . of mahogany, lined with lead and covered with the finest broad cloth."*

Thus, the "Star's" opinion of "magnificence"! Judged by the standards of that time, it is probable that almost all the newspaper's readers agreed. But, according to our standards of today, that coffin in which so good and great a man was laid to rest would seem most certainly to be not beautiful, nor to have any attributes of true "magnificence". You may judge for yourself, from the detailed description of the coffin, as reported in the same edition of the *"Evening Star"*.

The outside of the coffin is festooned with massive silver tacks representing drapery, in each fold of which is a silver star. There are eight massive handles to the coffin, four being placed on each side. The outer edge is tastefully scalloped with silver braid, to which are attached five tassels of five inches each in length. A row of silver tacks encircles the entire top of the coffin, being placed two inches from the outer edge. A silver plate, encircled by a shield formed of tacks of the same material, occupies the central position on top of the lid, with stars on the head and foot of the coffin on the outside.

The inside of the face lid is raised with white satin, the entire face being trimmed with black and white braid, fastened down with sixteen silver stars, four to each corner. The face lid and top of the coffin are fastened together with five silver stars.

The inside of the coffin is superbly lined with box pleated satin, the bottom and pillow being of the finest white silk, while rich three inch wide cheneil satin fringe encircles the entire inside. ☆

FOR THIS remarkable piece of merchandise, the Government received the following bill:

"To coffin covered with fine Broadcloth lined with White Satin & Silk trimmed with heavy Bullion fringe and tassells, lead inside lining, fine silver plate & walnut outside Box for Abraham Lincoln, late President of U. S. - - $1,500.00"

Other incidentals in the bill included such items as "700 yards of white silk @ $3.75; 257 yards of black silk @ $3.50; 132 yards of white cambric @ $1.00; 90 boxes of fine crape @ $7.50; 24 yards of white swiss @ $1.50; 158 pairs of black kid gloves @ $3.00; 126 pairs of white silk gloves @ $1.00; 84 pairs of black silk gloves @ $1.00; 170 boxes of white thread @ $3.25." * * * The total bill was $7,459.00.

In addition, John Alexander, upholsterer, (no relation to Dr. Alexander, the "embalmer and surgeon"), received $290 for "draping the East Room of White House with black and white crêpe, silk and alpaca, covering walls, windows, pictures and mirrors in the process, and festooning streamers of black silk down from ceiling."

George P. Hall, carriage maker, charged $350 for making the special hearse body in which the remains were conveyed from the White House to the Capitol for public services, and Mr. Alexander received an extra $75 for upholstering the catafalque on which the coffin rested during the lying-in-state.

ALTOGETHER, the United States Government paid out for "funeral merchandise" and trademen's services a total of $8,389. It was a very modest expenditure in the circumstances—and it certainly represented good-value-received for all the merchandise listed. *But notice now the following fact!*

It is worthy of our very special notice, particularly in these times of merchandise-shortages. For the kind of thinking which this fact brings to light is *still* with us. And, until it is considerably *modified*, to say the least, the full scope of the Funeral Profession's functions—as a *professional service!*—will in my judgment never be achieved! Here is the fact:

Altogether, as we have seen, a total of $8,389 was paid for Mr. Lincoln's funeral. It was, as we have also seen, a very moderate, reasonable expenditure. *And yet, of the total of over $8000, only a bare $260 was charged for Professional Services! And, even then, the only reason that this Service Charge was not still lower—at a scant $100—was that two Embalmers were in constant attendance during a period of 16 days! (At $10 per day for the two.)*

☆

HERE WAS surely the prime, historic example of "placing the burden on the casket"—the unfortunate tendency to consider the *Services* of the Funeral Director, (as distinct from the *merchandise* he sells), in terms of "secondary" and of hardly more than merely *"incidental"* value.

It is a tendency which, unfortunately, has come down through the years as a traditional custom. In recent times, it is true, a good many members of the Profession have modified the practice in some measure—to the extent, at least, of indicating clearly to their patrons that the casket and other merchandise, while absolutely essential, are nevertheless but secondary to the *Service* rendered. (Embalming, Funeral Direction, Personal Services, Use of Establishment, Facilities and Equipment, etc.)

But a great deal more towards this end remains to be accomplished. And the truth of that plain fact, I venture, will become more and more apparent in the months immediately before us. For the necessary restriction of merchandise, while not nearly as drastic as could have been decreed, will nevertheless place more and more increasing emphasis on the *Service* of this profession, purely as such. And, from the competitive viewpoint, *the Service that each individual Funeral Director renders will be more important to his "business" progress than it has ever been before!*



Abraham Lincoln's Funeral Train photographed on May 1, 1865 as it passed through Chicago

# A Funeral That Lasted Thirty-six Years

## • The Strange Story of the Burial of Abraham Lincoln

THE LIFE of Abraham Lincoln, 16th president of the United States whose birthday anniversary we celebrated this month, was filled with strange highlights, as fanciful as a romantic novel or fairy tale. Every American boy has thrilled to the story of his rise from a log cabin to the White House; every adult American has found equal inspiration in his immortal Gettysburg address, in his inflexible pursuit of the things he thought right and just, in his steadfast patriotism.

Lincoln's death and funeral, even as his life, were equally dramatic. When at the age of 56 his career was abruptly terminated by an assassin's bullet, there began a strange series of events unparalleled in the annals of our country. From April 15, 1865, when death occurred, until Sept. 26, 1901, when final burial was made, the name of Lincoln was perpetuated by unusual happenings, fact and myth.

The body of Lincoln was prepared for burial by the funeral firm of Alexander & Bryan, in Washington, D. C. Under directions of Secretary of War Stanton, they were forbidden to remove the discoloration of the eyes and upper part of the cheeks caused by the bullet wound which were to remain "as part of the history of the event."

Disputes and altercations marked the entire funeral ceremonies. Congress proposed that the body of Lincoln be placed in a vault in the Capitol which had originally been prepared for Washington, but the Illinois delegation insisted upon its return to Springfield, Ill. Final



This great arch was erected in Chicago to do honor to the remains of the martyr President



from Lincoln Journal director Feb. 1943 incomplete

Chi. Daily News

# Lincoln Funeral Firm To Mark Centennial

C. H. Jordan & Co., undertaking firm that looked after President Lincoln's body here after his assassination in 1865, will observe its 100th anniversary Thursday.

The company was founded by Collins H. Jordan, who died in 1897, according to Earl E. Darr, president.

**Two of Jordan's descendants still are officers.**

They are Mrs. Scott Jordan, vice-president, and Mrs. Cady M. Jordan, treasurer.

* * *

**THE FIRM'S** records reflect some of Chicago's great tragedies.

**The company made the arrangements for Lincoln's body when it paused a day here en route to Springfield for funeral services.**

Jordan's also handled many of the victims of the Iroquois theater fire (Dec. 30, 1903) and the Eastland ship disaster (July 24, 1915).

It also arranged the funeral of Sen. Stephen A. Douglas in 1861.

**The company's first establishment was at 134 N. Clark. That was burned in the Chicago fire of 1871.**

It now is at 221 E. Erie, where it has been since last May. For 27 years before that it was at 200 E. Erie, Darr said.

LIBRARY
*Boston Society of Natural History*

Museum of Science
Science Park, Boston 14, Mass.

December 11, 1957

Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry
Lincoln National Foundation
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Dr. McMurtry:

A reference question which I have been unable to answer is the name of the undertaker who embalmed President Lincoln, and where his office was.

The Boston Public Library reference librarian was unable to find the answer and suggested that I write you.

If you are able to help me I would appreciate it very much.

Sincerely yours,

Genevieve M. Scully

Genevieve M. Scully
Librarian

December 24, 1957

Miss Genevieve M. Scully
Librarian
Museum of Science
Science Park
Boston 14, Mass.

Dear Miss Scully:

The name of Abraham Lincoln's undertaker was Dr. Charles D. Brown who was also the embalmer who prepared "Willie" Lincoln for burial, in Febru ry, 1862.

I do not think Dr. Brown had an office. There is a letter in The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln Vol. VI, 1862-1863, pages 421-422 as follows: "Executive Mansion, Hon. Sec. of War: - Washington, Aug. 29, 1863. Dr. Brown, the embalmer, who has so long gone with our Armies, says he is now prevented in conseque ce of the loss of a paper. I suppose he should be given another, unless there be some reason to the contrary unknown to me. Yours truly, A. Lincoln."

Trusting that this information will be of some value to you, I remain

Yours sincerely,

RGM:sh

R. Gerald McMurtry

P.S. At the request of the Secretary of War Dr. Brown traveled with Lincoln's remains to Springfield, Illinois.

ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL LIBRARY

STATE OF ILLINOIS , WILLIAM G. STRATTON, GOVERNOR , SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

Jan. 2, 1958

Reference Report

Enclosed are copies of three references to the embalming of Lincoln's body.

In a scrapbook of clippings about Lincoln in the Historical Library is the following information taken from an unidentified clipping which, however, has been describing the obsequies in Chicago.

"The embalmer of the late President is Dr. ---- Brown, who holds the right for the United States from Prof. Succuet, of Paris. By this process, unlike that used by the Egyptians, nothing is removed from the body. The brain and viscera are left intact. The Doctor claims to be able absolutely to arrest the process of dissolution. He cannot restore a body to its life-like appearance before death, but he does claim to be able to preserve it in just the condition in which he receives it. What is the material used by the embalmer we are not informed; but whatever it is, the antiseptic fluid is injected into the carotid artery by means of a force pump. The effect of this substance is to make the body like marble. Dr. Brown informs our reporter that the body of the President will never know decay. After a time it will lose its marbleized appearance and become, to a certain extent, mummy-ized. It will not perceptibly change for several months."

# ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL LIBRARY

STATE OF ILLINOIS , WILLIAM G. STRATTON, GOVERNOR , SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS


January 6, 1958

Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry
Lincoln National Life Foundation
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Gerald:

In reply to your recent inquiry I am enclosing a photo print of material concerning the doctor who enbalmed Lincoln. I hope this will be of some value to you, and if we can be of further service, please do not hesitate to write.

Sincerely yours,

Clyde C. Walton

CCW:nj
Encl.


CLARENCE P. MC CLELLAND
NEWTON C. FARR
RAYMOND N. DOOLEY
*Trustees*

CLYDE C. WALTON
*State Historian*

MARGARET A. FLINT
*Reference Librarian*

# IV.

## THE FUNERAL AT WASHINGTON.

[illegible] had been received in the [illegible] preparations proceeded to prepare it for the [illegible] Dr. [illegible] assisted on the occasion of Doctor Brown[illegible] [illegible] were not used preparatory to the [illegible] Lincoln now made as perfect as [illegible] Lincoln's peculiar features of the late beloved Presi[illegible] embalming was performed in the President's own [illegible] and was in the presence of [illegible] Dr. [illegible] and his attending physicians of the late President. The body was dressed in its usual suit, and the [illegible] to prevent decay were carefully with[illegible] hermetical preparation injected which [illegible] [illegible] giving the body the appearance of [illegible]

[illegible] early [illegible] the Executive Mansion during the morning of Wednesday was one of the [illegible] [illegible] Nothing was [illegible] [illegible] arrangements for the funeral. [illegible] [illegible] preparations [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

From Hudson Strode, Lincoln and the Doctors (New York, 1933), 119

## LINCOLN AND THE DOCTORS

The for- call- -ntr-coop is still the best explanation for that remarkable double fracture

Following the arm during the war was a skillful embalmer named Charles D Brown whom Mr Lincoln had had occasion in 1863, to refer to as Dr Brown. This man was of the well known firm of Brown and Alexander. The *New York Herald* for February 22 1902 contains the following information. The body of Willie Lincoln was embalmed today by Doctors Brown and Alexander assisted by Dr Wood in the presence of attending physicians Doctors Stone and Hall, Senator Browning and Isaac Newton. The method of Sagnet of Paris was used and the results were entirely satisfactory to the attendant friends of the family. Thaddeus the youngest son of the President, is still dangerously ill and fears are entertained that his disease will assume the type which proved fatal to his brother. Who first the title of doctor was by courtesy or degree this Dr Brown had gained prominence by this skill and was assigned by Secretary Stanton to embalm the President's body and to care for it on the long rough journey back to the prairies of Illinois where, with reverence and stately ceremony it was entombed in the side of a hill near a peaceful brook. Soon a beautiful pile of bronze and granite grew on the crest of that grassy slope and the mausoleum of which stood a marble

January 8, 1958

Mr. Clyde C. Walton
State Historian
Illinois State Historical Library
Springfield, Illinois

Dear Mr. Walton:

Thank you for your letter with enclosures relative to Dr. Charles D. Brown, the doctor who embalmed Abraham Lincoln.

Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry left the office yesterday for a month's speaking trip in Texas. Upon his return I will bring your letter with its enclosures to his attention. I know he will be happy to hear from you and receive this valuable information.

Sincerely yours,

Margaret Moellering

MM:hw




Banthrico International

17 N. DESPLAINES ST., CHICAGO 6, U.S.A. • FINANCIAL 6-4560

adh 4/7/58

April 4, 1958

Mr. R. Gerald McMurtry
Lincoln Life Foundation
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Gerald:

I ran across something about your undertaker friend, Charles D. Brown, which you may or may not know about. He is mentioned in The Collected Works, Volume 6, page 421 in a letter from Lincoln to Stanton and also appears in Tracy--Uncollected Letters of Lincoln, page 231 and page 232. I also ran across his name in Lincoln Lore but I don't have the reference here in front of me.

Kindest regards,

Joe

Jos. L. Eisendrath, Jr.,

jlejr/gp

COIN BANKS
COIN FOLDERS
BRONZE SIGNS
NAMEPLATES

Banthrico International

17 N. DESPLAINES ST., CHICAGO 6, U.S.A. • FINANCIAL 6-4560.

ack 4/7/58

April 7, 1958

Mr. R. Gerald McMurtry
Lincoln Life Foundation
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Gerald:

I have found two interesting bits of information that you might like to know about--if you don't know already~~one~~ on your undertaker friend, Brown.

There is a reference to him and his process of embalming in a book by Lester "Life and Public Services of Charles Sumner" described on page 475 and the following page.

The other item is the recollections of a little boy named George O. Gitt, who hid under the speakers' platform at Gettysburg. That's found in Rufus R. Wilson's "Intimate Memories of Lincoln" on page 476.

Kindest regards,

Jos. L. Eisendrath, Jr.

jlejr/gp

(7)

Dr. Charles R. Brown, Embalmer

Frank T. Sands, Undertaker

Capt. Charles Penrose - Quartermaster and Commissary of Subsistence

Note: The three gentlemen whose names are annexed accompanied the escort

Power — 125

# JOHNSON MORTUARY

Edward C. Johnson

Gail R. Johnson

813 DIVERSEY PARKWAY
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60614
472-5051 472-5214 348-9406

July 19 - 1969

Editor - Lincoln Lore -
Lincoln Life Ins Co.
Ft. Wayne - Ind -

Sir:

I am a member of the Chicago Civil War Round Table and a life long student of embalming practices during the civil war. My Friend Pete Long has suggested I write to you and ask a few current questions.

1 - I have been advised that Samuel Wilkenson - a NY Journalist (don't know Newspaper) while reporting battle of Gettysburg found body of his son and wrote of his experience. Can you identify the Newspaper?

2 - I have searched for years attempting to locate biographical data on — Drs. Joseph Bell Alexander and Charles O. Brown — embalming Surgeons — who embalmed Pres & Willie Lincoln and countless thousands of others during the War. Very little has ever turned up about them and I am amazed that the men who became so famous — as the embalmers of the greatest man of his age — could just disappear.

any assistance or advice would be most deeply appreciated — cordially yours —

Edward C Johnson

P.S. Pete Long says I should apply for a place on your Lincoln Love mailing list.

July 22, 1969

Mr. Edward C. Johnson
813 Diversey Parkway
Chicago, Illinois 60614

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I cannot help you identify the newspaper that carried the story by Samuel Wilkerson (a New York journalist) regarding his experience of finding his son on the battlefield of Gettysburg. I have never heard of such a story before.

I have a little information on Charles **B.** Brown. Please note in LINCOLN LORE #1443 (pages 2-4) an article titled "And so they buried Lincoln." I enclose the above mentioned publication.

We will be happy to place your name on our LINCOLN LORE mailing list. Under separate cover I am sending you the 1969 issues.

Yours sincerely,

R. Gerald McMurtry

RGM/cvrw
Enclosure

# JOHNSON MORTUARY

Edward C. Johnson
GRaceland 2-5051

Gail R. Johnson
GRaceland 2-5214

813 DIVERSEY PARKWAY
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60614

24-July-1969

Dear Dr. McMurtry:

I sincerely thank you for your letter of the 22nd and it's contents.

On Page 2 - Col. 2 - 3rd Para. appears the classic & traditional error of failing to spell Dr. J. P. SUCQUET's name correctly and trying to manufacture another name Sagnet ?. As a student of embalming history I assure that the correct name is Sucquet — and I can send you a photo copy of the Front Cover of his "Traite de Visage dans L. Embaumement" Paris - 1862 - further Chas. Edw. Lester in his "Light & Darks of the Rebellion" Phila - 1863 - Page 144 - correctly spells it Sucquet in referring to Dr. Brown's process origin.

Hope this will clarify an obscure point!

Cordially - E. C. Johnson

(over)

I do know that the N Y Herald -
2-22-62 states " the method
of Sagnet of Paris was used" etc

Eof

July 28, 1969

Mr. E. C. Johnson
Johnson Mortuary
813 Diversey Parkway
Chicago, Illinois 60614

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I have your letter of July 24th. I regret that I misspelled "Sucquet." I had only the newspaper (NEW YORK HERALD) to rely on and the name was spelled "Sagnet."

Many thanks for the references that you have sent me and I will be glad to have the photocopy of the book with the name printed "Sucquet."

I hope that your research will provide you with new information on Brown and Alexander.

Yours sincerely,

R. Gerald McMurtry

RGM/cvrw

EDWARD C. JOHNSON
GRACELAND 2-5051

GAIL R. JOHNSON
GRACELAND 2-5214

JOHNSON MORTUARY
813 DIVERSEY BLVD.
CHICAGO 14, ILL.

29-July-1969

Dear Dr. McMurtry —

Please accept my apology for seeming to imply that you were the person responsible for the typographical (error) misspelling of Sucquets name — I intended to place the blame on the contemporary reporter (1862).

A representative of Dr. Sucquet is said to have visited New York City about 1840-45, demonstrated the process and sold the rights (-franchise) for US$1 (?) to Drs. Brown & Alexander then of New York City. The chemicals were sold to them by Dr Sucquet & shipped from France as ordered. This comes from 2 sources —

1 - published about Dr Holmes —

2 - a statement by Harry P. Cattell - about 1900 who was the actual embalmer of A. Lincoln - in 1900 was a Member of Wash DC Police Force.

# DE LA CONSERVATION

DES

# TRAITS DU VISAGE

## DANS L'EMBAUMEMENT

PAR

**J.-P. SUCQUET,**

Docteur en médecine, lauréat de l'Académie des sciences,
chevalier de la Légion d'honneur.

PARIS

ADRIEN DELAHAYE, LIBRAIRE ÉDITEUR,

PLACE DE L'ÉCOLE-DE-MÉDECINE.

1862

from my private collection —
E. O. Johnson —

Embalming

July 31, 1969

Mr. Edward Johnson
813 Diversey Blvd.
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Many thanks for the title page of J. P. Sucquet's book, 1862. I will file this along with your letter for future reference.
f

Yours sincerely,

R. Gerald McMurtry

RGM/cvrw

# The Man Who Put Abe Lincoln Away

**By Dr. Maggie Ballard**

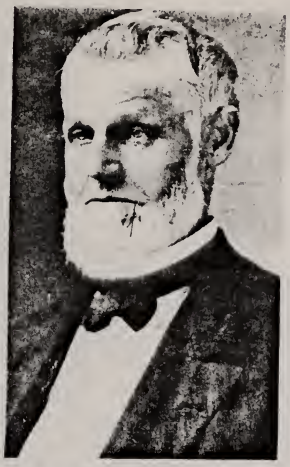
Jesse Arnott, who has a place in history because he buried Lincoln, was born in Monroe County, Virginia (now West Virginia), November 15, 1812, the son of William Truesdale and Mary (Garten) Arnott. He married Mary Elizabeth Handley, a sister of his stepmother who was Lucinda Handley.

Mr. Arnott was a deeply religious man as an article written for the Monroe County Watchman at the time of his death will attest. Mr. Asbury C. McNeer was a friend of Mr. Arnott and had seen him shortly before his death; we believe his statements are correct. Quote: "He was converted, to use his own words, 'from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet,' when about 16 years of age, at a camp meeting held on the Centerville (now Greenville) Methodist church lot. His whole life was in exact harmony with his professed conversion. He said to the writer last New Year's morning that family devotions had never been neglected in his house during all the long years of his married life. As a hearer of the preaching of the Word of God, he seemed to drink it in as a most refreshing draught from the pure living fountain. His conversations were of the most entertaining character and on religious topics were simply soul thrilling. His love-feast talks were a spiritual benediction to all who heard them. He prayed as one walking and talking with his nearest and most confidential friend. Praying in the public congregation, he led the worshippers right up to the throne of grace.

"He removed from the place of his nativity to Missouri, where he did a large and successful livery and undertaker's business (associated with Mr. Lynch also from Monroe County). Upon him was conferred the honor of burying President Abraham Lincoln.

"Mr. Arnott died May 11, 1896, at the home of his sister, Martha (Mrs. Jesse Jones), on Wolf Creek, Monroe County, being far advanced in his eighty-fourth year. His body was taken by his daughter, now lies with friends and relatives in Bellefontane Cemetery to await the resurrection of the just."

Mr. Arnott was a staunch Democrat and when first approached about the burial of President Lincoln, he refused. However, he reconsidered and accepted the honor as a true gentleman.



**LINCOLN'S UNDERTAKER**
**Jesse Arnott**

In a small volume entitled "Abraham Lincoln, His Life, Public Services, Death and Great Funeral Cortege With a History and Description of the National Lincoln Monument" by John Carroll Power, Springfield, Illinois, 1875, we read of the final stage of the funeral corteg: "As soon as the funeral car came along side of the depot (this was in Springfield, Illinois), the coffin was transferred to the beautiful hearse which had been tendered for the occasion by Messrs. Lynch & Arnott of St. Louis through Mayor Thomas of that city and accepted by Mayor Dennis of Springfield. The hearse was built in Philadelphia, at a cost of about six thousand dollars, and was larger than the ordinary size. It had been used at the funeral of the Hon. Thomas H. Benton. After the offer was accepted, the proprietors had it additionally ornamented with a silver plate engraving of the initials 'A.L.' around which was a silver wreath, with two inverted torches and thirty-six silver stars, representing the States of the Union. It was drawn by six superb black horses, draped in mourning and wearing plumes on their crests. The horses belonged to Messrs. Lynch & Arnott also and were driven on this occasion by Mr. A. Arnott without the aid of grooms. The possession moved in the following order: . . ."

Mr. Jesse Arnott drove the horses and not Mr. A. Arnott as the statement above says. The confusion is understandable as Mr. Anderson Arnott, a brother of Jesse Arnott, had his own livery business in the same area.

We are indebted to Ruby Arnott Beard (Mrs. Mitchell Beard) of Silver Spring, Maryland, for verifying this record and for supplying the photograph of Jesse Arnott. Mrs. Beard is several years past the century mark. Her mental faculties are clear, and she remembers her Uncle Jesse Arnott well.



**Henry P. Cattell** (1838-1915) embalmed President Lincoln while employed in the firm of Brown & Alexander, Embalming Surgeons. He served for three months in the Union Army in 1861 before joining Brown & Alexander. After his stint as an embalmer, Cattell became a lithographer after the war and then joined the Washington, D.C., police in 1880 from which he retired in 1914.

1440 Monument Avenue
Springfield, IL 62702

MUSEUM OF FUNERAL CUSTOMS

# The Embalming Of President Lincoln

## April 15, 1865



The news of Lincoln's assassination stunned the country. People throughout the North, and even some in the South, banded together like never before to mourn the loss of their President. Cities, large and small, made plans for official mourning, draping buildings and appointing officials to attend the funeral, the first great state funeral in America.

Lincoln died at Peterson's Boarding House at 7:22 a.m., on April 15, 1865. Soon after death was officially pronounced, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton and the military took over preparations for the funeral. Stanton arranged to have the martyred President embalmed and would eventually create a train schedule for Lincoln's final trip home. A detachment of soldiers placed the President's body in a coffin and then in a hearse and escorted him to the White House. With a small group of mostly medical men observing, two pathologists from the Army Medical Museum performed a cranial autopsy, recovering the fatal bullet.

Embalming immediately followed the autopsy. To perform the actual operation, Stanton called upon the firm of Brown & Alexander, Embalming Surgeons. They sent one of their employees, Henry P. Cattell. Cattell first positioned the body, closed the eyes, arched the eyebrows, and set the mouth in a slight smile. He also shaved the face except for a short tuft at the chin. After closing the cranial incision, he began the arterial embalming. Cattell used the femoral artery (in the thigh) to inject the embalming fluid. The main preservative chemical in the solution was zinc chloride, extracted by dissolving sheets of zinc in hydrochloric acid. The embalming solution and method were both of a French nature, adopted by Brown & Alexander before the war. Lincoln did not receive any cavity treatment, as it was not a common practice at the time. Soon, Lincoln's body hardened to a marble-like state, ready for the amazing journey in store for it.

Persistent problems with skin discoloration around the eyes resulted from the grim nature of the murder. Due to a phenomena called transmitted force, the bullet's impact as it entered the back of the head cracked both of the skull's orbital plates in the front bruising the skin. With constant, but simple, cosmetic attention, the staff of Brown & Alexander, who traveled with the body, were able to keep Lincoln in a presentable viewing condition with the help of local embalmers and undertakers along the way. Though often noting these discolorations, newspaper accounts generally reported favorably on the president's appearance.

During the journey from Washington, D.C., to his final resting place in Springfield, Illinois, an estimated one million citizens viewed Lincoln's body as it lay in repose in twelve cities along the funeral train's route. Lincoln's dramatic and spectacular funeral journey introduced embalming to a broad audience and popularized the procedure. With so many people viewing first-hand the benefits of embalming for both funerary and sanitary purposes, it began to earn a newly found acceptance. Within the next few decades, undertakers and families would adopt embalming on an increasing scale, until it finally became an established social, and in some cases religious, custom for Americans, especially of the Christian faith.

## Cities where Lincoln lay in state:

Washington, DC
Baltimore, MD
Harrisburg, PA
Philadelphia, PA
New York, NY
Albany, NY
Buffalo, NY
Cleveland, OH
Columbus, OH
Indianapolis, IN
Chicago, IL
Springfield, IL



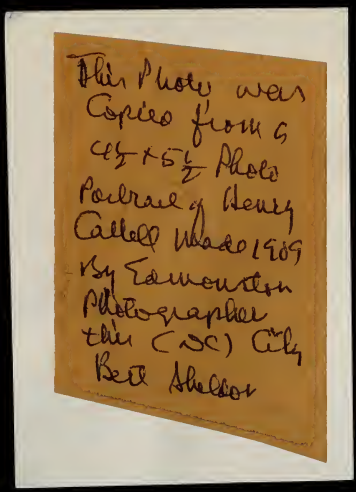
Henry P. Cattell
Assisted in
embalming Lincoln's
body

October 16 1969

Statement of Bert Sheldon 3315 Wisconsin Ave NW
Washington DC regarding the small B&W photo
accompanying this page; (at top of page)
I do Certify that the above small Black
and White photo is - I believe - unquestionably -
a Photo of Henry P Cattell who died in this city in
Dec 1915 and is Buried in Congressional
Cemetery in this - Washington DC -, City. Look
On the Back of the above photo for my hand-
-written Endorsement and Certification of the
authenticity of the Likeness of Henry P Cattell; Copied
from an Original Photo in the archives of
the KB French Masonic Lodge; By Kodak Photo Co
Wisconsin ave near Albemarle NW
Bert Sheldon

the small Photo




This Photo was
Copied from a
4½ x 6½ Photo
Portrait of Henry
Cabell Wade 1909
by Edmonston
Photographer
this (DC) City
Bert Shelton

Oct 1969

(Xerox Copy)
This is the reverse side of the 1905 photo-portrait of Henry P Cattell, which I borrowed from the archives (I borrowed the original Photo not this Xerox Copy) of the KS French NFHM fraternal lodge of Free Masonry. I made this Xerox Copy in Oct 1969. as you may notice his (Cattell's) signature is on the back of his photo and that is his signature certified to as the true Copy Bert Sheldon 3315 Wisconsin Avenue Washington DC Oct 1969

This is the Xerox Copy of the back of Cattell's photo.

CREDIT LINE MUST BE GIVEN
David B. Edmonston
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Page One

23 Oct 69

Dear Doctor McMurtry

at the last meeting of the L.S. I sat 2 chairs removed from Josephus Cobb. when he heard me mention that I do "record searching" for a Chicago Funeral director (who writes texts and has published historical articles on the various and many Ceremonies rituals and Customs practiced at death and at funerals Et Cetra) - he spoke up and mentioned - that he was NOT Paul Revere, but did Employ Josephus Allen was in a U.S Govt warehouse (Customhouse?) in Nearby Va and that then

23 Oct

(and that they) were Examining a
tool (a device) used in the Embalming
of Lincoln. When I arrived home I
wrote to a Letter asking about the
tool (a instrument) and she was Kind
Enough to write Back telling
me all about = a Box with a Glass
front "Like a Picture frame" that
was Built to go on Lincoln Coffin.
That too was absolute news to me!!

So = on 23 Oct = I wrote for 2 no Letter
But! when Miss Ott spoke up at
Lg meeting she said Josephine Allen
mentioned that "the minister/was going to
throw it out as it was dirty"!! the fool!

Doctor Mc Murtry [condensed]

I'm not going to get into 23Oct69
any war of words over Josephus
Gelen's threatening to "throw the thing out-
because it's dirty" I understood that
over because the Episcopal Cathedral
Guides when they take tourists past
the Kneeling Lincoln statue tell the
tour-Group that "he Jumped down
off his horse and his knees in the
weeds leaves and trees to Pray".

(15000 People were there, nobody saw him
do that "Kneeling into weeds and leaves" business)

But the Cathedral Guides still go by
the statue and point to Mc Jumping off
his Horse - So I gave up any more
Fighting Spirit. (It doesn't Pay)

Docks RG Murky [comment]

So; I'm not going to cause any tension or Embarrassment for Josephine Cobb (or by the way this is Lawyer with NAT Park Service history/Affic I don't know if she resigned or 'retired'; I do not know)

But - I do not Expect very much from Josephine Cobb, as I suspect she will want to protect Miss Allen. Miss Cobb need not fear - I make no attack. I'm reasonably sure Ms Cobb will cover up for Miss Allen. (I don't Care)

On the other hand the dance (tool) may be still there! I wonder!!

And;

Doctor McMurtry [continued] 23 Oct 69

Quod? I wonder how they knew it was "an instrument used in Embalming President Lincoln".

I have written the Nat Park Service History div asking about the alleged (and perhaps missing) "thing" I shall of course keep You informed.

The Case I'm working on now for Ed C Thurston of Chicago is the (865) 27 Yr old Henry Cottell who actually (He was not the firm he was merely the Employee who happened to do the Jobs) Embalmed Miss Lincoln. I have a good deal of data on Cottell, so far. But

Addendum

Doctor McMurtry [continued] 6

23 Oct 69

PS

But -- then, I'm not there with Brother Arthur. ~~[illegible]~~ tho I do have quite a lot on Him.

Cordially and with Sincere Best wishes to You and Your family

Cordially always Ken Sheldon

File under death of Lincoln

23 Oct 69

Dear Mrs Josephine Cobb

Thank you so very much for your answer to my recent inquiry about the tool (& instrument) for and Josephine Allen Examined in a US Government warehouse in nearby Virginia

Again I am very sincerely - and Extremely - appreciative of your Good favor in answering my letter! I understood =

" That the instrument was used in embalming the Civil War President "
(That what I very clearly understood you to say)

Mrs Josephine Cobb: (continued)

23 Oct 1964

I certainly don't wish to. I certainly do not intend to cause any unpleasantness, or controversy or any embarrassment to anybody. Please rest assured of that. In whatever circumstances do I have any complaint.

This is merely a cordial, sincere quest for information submitted in a friendly, and very cordial spirit.

Do You have any information or any recollection of the device I understood You to say was used to embalm President Lincoln?

Mrs Josephine Cobb [Continued]

23 Oct 65

When I wrote my previous letter about the Embalming instrument You wrote back and mentioned a Kit with a Glass front that resembles a Picture frame and some tools that has been used in that construction. I am still very respectfully Eager to know more about the Embalming Instrument You and Miss Allen observed in the warehouse over in Virginia.

Please do Help Me On this.

23 Oct 1969

I certainly am obligated to You for Your important and generous Cooperation. Perhaps - some day - I can do You a favor - I'd like to - Call on me anytime I can help.

Respectfully, Cordially and Most Gratefully
Bird Sheldon

(1)

November
1969

Honourable M Walter Hickel
Secretary
US Department of Interior

I am making my inquiry on behalf of Edward C Johnson 813 Deming Parkway Chicago 60614 Illinois. Mr Johnson is a very busy and successful funeral director whose hobby is the history of all Ceremonies and Customs - in all Countries, for all time - practices at times of death and funerals. He is a responsible, extremely well-informed, and absolutely COMPETENT historian in this special field. Simply an 'all round Scholar'. Please do help me.

Gerald Please do - OK ↑
Hold Chr up to a Kite Light

2

PL

8 NOVEMBER 1965

Honorable Secretary
US Dept of Interior,
Walter J. Hickel

Although I very forcibly did not keep a copy of my handwritten letter of inquiry on Carlan it went to Mr George Olin, Chief Interpreter, Visitor Services, National Park Service.

My letter to Mr Olin was an inquiry requesting any- and all - data & information his office could give me about any "Embalming Instrument used to Embalm the Civil War President April 1865"

He hasn't answered my letter, and approximately two weeks have now My

Pg

Manuscripts Section
U.S. Dept of Historical
Washington

Dear Sir:

My letter to Mr Clark on request
regarding our - our acc - date
of retirement his office sends
this me about our "Indebtedness
returnees and to Indochina th
(See our Treasury Digest 1950'

It hasn't occurred my letter, one
approximately two weeks then Mr

13

8 NOVEMBER 1965

Honorable Mr Wade Hienes
Secretary; and Cabinet Officer
U.S. Department of Interior

The report a Comment about the 'device'
a "tool" used to Embalm President
Lincoln's body April 1865 first came
to me at a luncheon at the Federal
Bar Association Building on N.W. when
when a person sitting on my
left told the story:--

and said; that a Guest of Joseph
Adler of Adlerika Park Avenue:-
that Mr Adler took the two of
them (Mr Adler and one other person)
to a warehouse in nearby Virginia
where - in storage - was the Embalming

73

BOUVARD
1901

Bouvard M. Marie Pierre
Secretary; one Cabinet office
U.S. Department of Justice

Th' Department of Commerce - Observ'th' Navy
of "Tad" were to Theodore President
Inaugural Ball Paris 1801 first Com
to Mr of C Lieutenant Sixth Fleet
Vice Presidential Wedding or Mrs
Water Supreme sitting or Mr
by the Th' Plan: --

Our Ass; the of Chair of Department
Miller of Mations Post Prince: -
Mrs Mrs Miller Took th two of
Plan (Mr Miller Mrs Mrs Sec Treas)
the Mortgage of Mortgage Nicholas
Plan - in Step - Mr the Inspection

P4

8 NOVEMBER 1965

Secretary; and Cabinet Officer
U S Department of Interior
Hon Mr Walter J Hickel

I most certainly do not wish to intrude into any Hush-Hush, Top-Secret, Classified area; and, I Hope I'm not doing so.

If the "device" a "tool" has been so characterized, - I definitely have not been so informed.

I wonder if you could get the correct data on this Embalming instrument used on the deceased Chief Executive President! Please do help me.

I would like to see the "device"; - if I may be allowed to do so - I should like to get a snapshot-photo (as I have an inexpensive "Instamatic"). Please - May?!

I am not writing this letter to cause anybody any headache or inconvenience; and, I Hope that will not be the result of this letter

I certainly will be very sincerely grateful indeed for your generous and important help -- Please do help me.

Respectfully, Bert Sheldon.

I am writing the letter to
Miss Murdoch and Murdoch
Mrs Inconvenience; one, I hope
does not to the Secretary of the
Letter

I certainly was to very sincerely
Thanks indeed for their Service
one Important help -- Theorda
help me.

Respectfully, Mrs Holden.

8 November
1969

Honourable Secretary
The Watergate Hotel
The Department of Interior, D.C.

I am very eagerly hoping that I may have
your support, and very generous help
in this matter.

It is not my Purpose in writing this
letter to have an Embarrassed anybody;
and I Hope that that result does not
Happen.

I shall be enormously grateful, and
appreciative of Your kindness,

respectfully, Bert Sheldon

4

8 Januar
1924

9 November 1969
3315 Wisconsin Ave
Washington 16 DC

Honorable Doctor Ernest A Connolly
Chief; Office of Archeology
and History; Room 618
U S Department of Interior.
Washington DC.

Dear Doctor Connolly; Sir

About two or three weeks ago, while
attending a lunch at the Federal Bar Building
the Reno scales on my left spore
having been a Guest of Josephine
Allen and having visited a
storage-warehouse located in
nearby Virginia and while in
the storage-warehouse Mrs Allen

DOCTOR CONNOLLY:- CONTINUED. 9 NOV-1969

(Mrs Allen) showed her guest an instrument which 'was used to Embalm the deceased Civil war President, April 1865'!

A few days later I called in person at Ford's Theatre, spoke to Mr Colbert about How I could obtain 'information on this "Embalming instrument."; Mr Colbert advised me to write to Mr George Olin. "Chief Interpreter Visitor Service" - and I did, - about two weeks ago.

Mr Olin has not replied to my letter of inquiry about the "Embalming instrument-used to Embalm Mister Lincoln' I am enormously disappointed.

A3

9 November 69

Doctor Ernest A Connally:

I certainly do not mean to intrude into any area of 'classified' material, and I hope I am not doing so.

May I very respectfully ask: (A) to see the embalming instrument; and- (B) may I take a snapshop-Photo of it (with my inexpensive Instamatic camera)? Please do help me.

Mrs Allen is now retired from National Park Service, the last known local address was a P. O. Box 11 at Post Office 20044. The last known local telephone number is now being answered by people who do not speak English. The office that sends the retirement checks to her should have her address.

7 November 1964

Dear Ernest A Connolly

I recently had a photograph of Henry P Cattell, who embalmed the remains of the Civil war Presidents.

If you'd like to have Mr Cattell's Photo, and; a photo of his grave stone, I'd be pleased to present both to National Park Service with my Compliments.

Cattell was employed by "Brown and Alexander", Embalmers.

I wonder what authentic data is available to clearly establish the fact that the "instrument" was so used!! Have you access to any information on "that"? May I see the Corroborative data that verifies the story?

FYI re MMC Keep ch 3
Enclosed letter for your
files

3 December 1969

Edward S. Herman

I am sending You here copies of three letters I
have received from persons in
NYC Area Services; [which is a part of the Inquiry]

Reported to the Task - a Conversation - directed to me, at
the last meeting of the Lawyers Group in which the
statement was made; - that in a Government-occupied
warehouse, in nearby Virginia - was "an INSTRUMENT
which was said to have been used to Embalm the
deceased Civil War Presidents April 1865"

My own, very definite feeling is that; we very Probably will
never Ever see, or verify, or handle or Photograph or otherwise
to our own satisfaction determine that there actually
was such a device; As used in the ~~manner~~ manner it was said to
Have been used.

I Hardly know how to write - we stand on the matter, I/We know How
I personally feel - I'm not quite clear Yet what You
want to do. Do You want to aprreciably "Hammer
away" at the missing persons in Interior; Or shall we drop it?
I can swing either way; So "advise".

3 Beaune 1951

Cher ami

Je suis très touché de votre
bon souvenir. Nous pensons souvent
à vous tous. Vous avez bien
raison de dire que le temps
passe vite. Déjà 6 ans que
nous sommes mariés. Nous
avons deux enfants charmants
et bien portants. Nous
sommes très heureux.
Nous espérons bien
vous revoir un jour.
Nous vous embrassons
bien affectueusement
Votre

P2

3 Dec 69

Edward E Johnson

The reason I feel that we Probably are washed up on the matter is

when Mrs Allen showed the "instrument" to Miss Cobb Mrs Allen is said to have remarked that she was thinking of "drowning it out."

When Jo Cobb remarked - the statement was directed at me - that she had been shown the device by Mrs Allen (by her remark) it was in response to:— Somebody asked me 'what are you working on now Ken' and I mentioned my recent searching for data on Henry Cattell who personally Entertained President Lincoln. whereupon Miss Cobb spoke up talking about the "Entertaining instrument. I could Possibly have been mistaken, it was a casual statement, it was made in a situation where it was clearly Pertinent. So I am absolutely completely Convinced (intimately) without any reservation doubt, a hesitation I know what she said. Ken!

Pa

3 Dec 47

Tausend Dank

Ich warte ? Ich bin in Frankfurt die Woche auf der Messe ; es

wäre mir sehr lieber Abends zu kommen. Ich habe Gott sei Dank noch Arbeit und muss viel

Übersetzungen machen :

Wenn Du Zeit hast, schreibe mir bitte an Mo-

nat da ich Ende Januar in Wien

sein werde. Ich freue mich Dich wieder zu sehen !— Herzlich grüsse

Mutti und Vater und Dein Kind ! Deine Ilse

Dein Onkel ist sehr krank. Ich habe ihn

heute Abend besucht. Tausend Grüsse

Ilse

3 Dec 64

To Johnson

(Bad!) when I wrote him Gbb asking for further information on the Embalming device, she wrote back telling me about a "box with a seam top on it; that was made to go on Lincolns Coffin"

I wrote to her again, asking her about the Embalming instrument. She waited several weeks before she replied. I feel sure the Phone was often in the period of time. Her mail (Her Personal letter-home) Letter enclosed this in.

This "Removing Coffin" from the original Picture. The room in this matter, the bar. Changed the tune

no hands got a leg to stand on. Her letter has petered out and Her leg warmer-flow, the only answer we have on her is a Post Office Box #.

P3

Abel?

To Heinrich 3 a

(Paul) when I were was can among to hunt
wynnonder or ik Tuchmeny Kunz ok
mein Mann Liebig in eigen "Ihr wirke
Hann Lyon it: "Das war wenn in Ja es
Lunaren Ihre"

Wenn ich eigen, among he ehren ik
Tuchmeny interessant. Ik wenn Kunz mein
Leben ik eigen, Ihre dass ik Kunz mein
Onkel + the Friedel Kunz. Ihr wenn ich
Kunz Ihr ik) Ich + Tuchmeny Ihren,

Ihr "Kunz off" Ihre ik einigen Kunz ik
Herr in Ihr wenn, ik Ihr "Chemie Ihr Kunz"

wo Kunz ik + Ihr To ehre en mir eher Ihr
Patrick one Ihr ey wenn Ihr, ik Kunz
mein + Ihre en Ihr + Tod Ihr Ihr #.

3 Dec 69

Tom Johnson

When a man from Texas walks into a Congress a soldering iron with an Embedment instrument (Dr Connally) it looms to me as if we'd better Sit up. He attempts to substitute an argument - a supposition that could it perhaps have been a soldering iron? Yes Yeah! and it is high high up in Parkland importance as Dallas.

Dave Belin ignores serious things and Tom about darkening it to archives, For Heaven sake! shed a tear from reality & some such nonsense. His Honesties My for the Best were serious Lobe, and Td the Mirror the mans - I wonder if he dump it deliberately? Both Dean and Connally Both (yes) was alleged in charge of those things? did the Have a Help & assistant & was the Assistant, How did anyone Else know that the device was used to Embalm A.L.?

Sept 19

Dear Johnson

Why don't you write me more often
(once a week) Then I could
understand what is going on.
Is there anything I could
do for you? Can I help you in
Indian? Anything at home.

Have you received Xmas things yet? Then
what do you still want? Anything else?
Let me know quickly so I can send them.
I'm getting on fine. Have finished
one year - 2 more to go.
Keep it up!? Feel free to write
me. Will I ever see you again?
Do you ever think of me?
Not often; we often do things
for me I have to remind a few
thousand. Then are there two
who do more for Indian AL?

3 Dec 69

Ed Johnson

was the artifacts, or memorabilia inventoried, after all? It was assumed (to the Room) was the person alive then, was the Person interrogated, Is any inquiry been directed (by mail) to turn aclen. why does (Glen completely ignore the warehouse and dart to Waterbury the thing happened (I did happen) in the warehouse. How did anybody know that it was an "Entabulating instrument" (I wonder) (I must have had a Capon?) I wonder' are they trying with 'new arrows' what is Your Experiment, what do You think we ought to do. In all for dropping it Even if we keep keeping on it In absolutely sure we alone ought to locate the alleged Tabulating device. Pity the way what the thing look like is it a knife, a Pump a Soup ladle Cup & spoon it it rubber hose Here is a Picture of one, circa 1565 as Ever Bert

Ze Thuner

Abre 19

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
*National Archives and Records Service*
*Washington, D.C. 20408*

November 13, 1969

NNSA

Mr. Bert Sheldon
3315 Wisconsin Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20016

Dear Bert:

I cannot recall to whom I was talking in the Lincoln Group when I mentioned the work done on Mr. Lincoln's coffin by a local welder. Nor have I been able to recall his name. The box of tools used by the welder is among the properties of the Ford Museum, whether or not it is on display there. In the absence of Mrs. Allen, there must be someone who is familiar with accessioning procedures there who could show you the item. You might enquire of Mr. Harris.

If I were not on another assignment this year, I would be happy to relocate the tools and the box in which they were displayed. It will be several months before I can take up items of Lincoln interest again.

Sincerely,

Josephine Cobb

JOSEPHINE COBB
Specialist in Iconography

Dear Bert - I hope I didn't say "embalming" because I would be mistaken - Thanks for writing. Jo

*Keep Freedom in Your Future With U.S. Savings Bonds*

Embalming of A.L.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL CAPITAL PARKS - CENTRAL
1100 OHIO DRIVE, S. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242

IN REPLY REFER TO:

November 20, 1969

Mr. Bert Sheldon
3315 Wisconsin Avenue, N. W.
Apartment 302
Washington, D.C. 20016

Dear Mr. Sheldon:

We apologize for the delay in answering your recent letter concerning the embalming instruments supposed to have been used to embalm President Lincoln. At the time your letter arrived, I was on vacation and did not return until November 12. As the letter was addressed to me personally, it was not opened during my absence.

In pressing a search for the instrument of which you speak, we have been unsuccessful in finding any such artifact in the Lincoln collection. The records hold no mention of such an instrument ever being in the collection. After ascertaining that we do not have such material, our next endeavor was to contact the Medical Museum, but they too reply in the negative.

Mr. John Lissimore, the present park Historian at Ford's Theatre has been assigned to this project and a short report from Mr. Lissimore is attached. In the progress of this investigation, he has searched the library of the theatre and contacted several other sources. As you might know this has taken time.

About all that we can furnish concerning your inquiry is that embalming was practiced at the time of the Civil War; that the President's body was embalmed; and that it was performed by a Washington firm. No trace of the instruments used in this operation has been discovered as far as can be ascertained.

We are sorry that we cannot be more helpful in this matter, however, we will continue to be on the look-out for these artifacts. If you should happen to learn of their whereabouts, we would appreciate hearing about it also.

Sincerely yours,

George Olin

George Olin
Chief, Interpretation &
Visitor Services

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL CAPITAL PARKS - CENTRAL
1100 OHIO DRIVE, S. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242

IN REPLY REFER TO:

November 21,1969

Mr. Bert Sheldon
3315 Wisconsin Avenue, N. W.
Apartment 302
Washington, D.C. 20016

Dear Mr. Sheldon:

Your letter to the Honorable Walter J. Hickel, Secretary of the Interior, has been referred to this office for reply.

After due investigation, it has been established that Mr. Olin was on vacation at the time that your letter addressed to him personally was received. It was opened upon his return and turned over to the Historian at Ford's Theatre for research. After a thorough search by the Historian, no artifacts of the type you describe have been found.

It is regretted that we have been unable to help you in this matter and we apologize for the delay incurred. If in the future any information concerning your inquiry is discovered, we will see to it that you are advised.

Sincerely yours,

William R. Failor

William R. Failor
Superintendent

Embalming Equipment (1)

Hooo up to Rick Light

Copy to Dodo McMurtry

15 Dec 1969

Dear Ed Thurston

I Have Your last recent letter in which You requested me to do some reading in Marcena (marcello) Patricii MSS Malelia at the Library of Congress; I am not ignoring Your request, I am merely slow in getting started. I went to Patricii MSS once before for You, I can read the penmanship But; I'll try again. However: I doubt very much that I shall do any Patrick-Hunting before 1970- Then I'll get started on General P. OK?

I am definitely of the opinion that getting anything away from US Government is Entirely outside the Realm of Possible. If You want to try it; and have any Political record of contributions made if so P write Percy - if Democrat find / identify and select some good Chicago Democrat / Congressman and ask some Political friend

15 déc 1911

Mon cher Thomas

J'ai vu tout récemment Lily à qui j'ai parlé de la pauvre Mme [illegible] (Marie) Fleuriot. Mlle Valérie [illegible] [illegible] ; on me [illegible] pauvre Lily regrette. Son mari la [illegible] [illegible]. Mme la Princesse Mathilde [illegible] [illegible] ; je ne [illegible]. Mardi soir Mme [illegible] [illegible] Mme Arvède Barine [illegible] [illegible] ; Mme Arvède [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

To Johnson:

15 Dec 69 - (P2 -

Got some Chicago mortician - for whom You do work to B the letter writer regarding loan of the tools incidentals ('germane') to Mc's Coffin-closing-and-sealing for Your Funeral Directors Museum. But! It will B necessary that (A) the funeral director have prior 'IN' "Communication lines" to the Congressman; in other words, the Funeral director should (A1) Have made political contribution (A2) to a Congressman of the same Party as to whom said Mortician have the Political Contribution. Or; Then Voter; a petition from the Friends and Relatives and U.P. and Preacher of "Ds mortician Association. I'm afraid You will have out in the Cold; But, if You want to try Go ahead; and, Good Luck. (I'd rather not B a responsible Relative that Sic. T.)

Le Dimanche 15 avril - Pâques -

Ma chère Marie-Antoinette, je viens de recevoir ta lettre avec ton dessin (mais) je n'ai pas encore eu le temps de le regarder. Je suis désolée de ne pas t'avoir écrit plus tôt mais j'ai eu beaucoup de travail. Nous avons eu des visites de famille et nous sommes allés à la messe. Nous avons aussi été à la chasse aux œufs. Nous avons trouvé beaucoup de chocolat. Nous avons aussi mangé beaucoup de gâteaux. Nous avons eu un très bon repas. Nous avons mangé de l'agneau, des légumes et des pommes de terre. Nous avons aussi mangé de la salade. Nous avons bu du vin. Nous avons aussi mangé du fromage. Nous avons mangé des fraises. Nous avons aussi mangé des cerises. Nous avons mangé des gâteaux. Nous avons mangé des bonbons. Nous avons mangé des chocolats. Nous avons mangé des glaces. Nous avons mangé des crêpes. Nous avons mangé des gaufres. Nous avons mangé des tartes. Nous avons mangé des pâtisseries. Nous avons mangé des biscuits. Nous avons mangé des confitures. Nous avons mangé des miels. Nous avons mangé des noix. Nous avons mangé des noisettes. Nous avons mangé des amandes. Nous avons mangé des pistaches. Nous avons mangé des raisins secs. Nous avons mangé des figues. Nous avons mangé des dattes. Nous avons mangé des abricots secs. Nous avons mangé des pruneaux. Nous avons mangé des pêches sèches. Nous avons mangé des poires sèches. Nous avons mangé des pommes sèches. Nous avons mangé des bananes sèches. Nous avons mangé des ananas secs. Nous avons mangé des mangues sèches. Nous avons mangé des papayes sèches. Nous avons mangé des kiwis secs. Nous avons mangé des goyaves sèches. Nous avons mangé des litchis secs. Nous avons mangé des longanes secs. Nous avons mangé des ramboutans secs. Nous avons mangé des durians secs. Nous avons mangé des jacques secs. Nous avons mangé des fruits de la passion secs. Nous avons mangé des caramboles sèches. Nous avons mangé des pitayas sèches. Nous avons mangé des grenades sèches. Nous avons mangé des kakis secs. Nous avons mangé des nèfles sèches. Nous avons mangé des sorbes sèches. Nous avons mangé des cormes sèches. Nous avons mangé des azeroles sèches. Nous avons mangé des jujubes secs. Nous avons mangé des dattes de Chine sèches. Nous avons mangé des kumquats secs. Nous avons mangé des citrons confits. Nous avons mangé des oranges confites. Nous avons mangé des pamplemousses confits. Nous avons mangé des mandarines confites. Nous avons mangé des clémentines confites. Nous avons mangé des tangerines confites. Nous avons mangé des satsumas confits. Nous avons mangé des yuzus confits. Nous avons mangé des kumquats confits. Nous avons mangé des limes confites. Nous avons mangé des bergamotes confites. Nous avons mangé des cédrats confits. Nous avons mangé des combavas confits. Nous avons mangé des calamondins confits. Nous avons mangé des finger limes confits. Nous avons mangé des australian limes confits. Nous avons mangé des papedas confits. Nous avons mangé des ichang papedas confits. Nous avons mangé des hystrix papedas confits. Nous avons mangé des micrantha papedas confits. Nous avons mangé des latifolia papedas confits. Nous avons mangé des balsamifera papedas confits. Nous avons mangé des ichangensis

Ed Johnson; 15 Dec 1969 (P3)

I have two bells in which you seem to be quite tolerant (and perhaps, more generous) in your judgement of Miss Cobb and Mrs Allen when you state Mrs Allen must - very probably have been mistaken in her judgement as to what the instrument really was. My thinking was that surely it must have been tapped on; Mrs Allen would not know how to speculate that it was an Embalming instrument; It had to be tapped & Mrs Allen would not have ventures such a guess she would have 'known-how' unless she was born and raised in a family of Embalmers and knew that how come she is alleged to have said that it was used to Embalm deceased Lovers. You are more charitable much more kind than realistic, I think. It does have to have a tap on it; & we could have this incident determined in Court in Los Angeles. Happened; also St Cloud Hospital

Le 7 Janvier 1951 p 3

Mais Tu vois je vais très bien à ta part
Demain (ou Jeudi, ou Samedi) en Tous
Cas Mercredi ! Mais Cela ne Me Gêne Pas
Pas Mon Petit Mari - Mais Probablement
Mon Mistigri n'Ira Pas en Ville
Le Mercredi Matin. Me Chercher ne Le Gêne
Pas Mais Mon Petit Cœur Il Faut
Mieux Ne Rien Faire Le Matin Après Mon
Arrivée Car Travailler Intellectuellement !
Mais Le Reste Je Me Gêne Jamais Et
Mon Amour Aussi. Pour Le Week-End Mais
Toujours Mieux Si Mon Bon Mari Peut
Y Aller Seul ! Je Comprends Ses Bons Mots
Mais Ce Ne Le Dispense Pas D'Aller Voir
Ses Vieux Parents Qui Ont Besoin D'Un
Petit Mot Gentil De Leur Fils Et Qui
Sont Très Gentils Pour Lui Et Moi
Aussi Et Qui Nous Font Plaisir Quand
Nous Y Allons Ensemble Et Qui Nous
Font Plaisir Quand Nous Les Recevons
Ici Et Qui Nous Font Plaisir Quand
Nous Leur Téléphonons Et Qui Nous
Font Plaisir Quand Nous Leur Envoyons
Des Cartes Postales Et Qui Nous Font
Plaisir Quand Nous Leur Envoyons Des
Lettres Et Qui Nous Font Plaisir Quand
Nous Leur Envoyons Des Photographies.

You are kind, and very generous to Mrs Allen. Jan was cynical. Did Ed & Allen die not brow-up in a family of Embalmers - of Course, maybe she did :(I doubt it very much)

Unless the device was tagged to Allen would Have known it from the office-Snafu "Key" to the Parade Grounds. (In a Circus is the "Key to the Center Pole" a "Dicy Hoover"?)

However I'm glad You feel the way You do. It Can give us a more pleasant, a more kind, a more friendly Ending to our inquiry. I Have to Hammer at "Big Mag" People But, - unfortunately, I find myself in positions occasionally when that seems the only thing to do However, I find, - in the long run, it doesn't pay it doesn't Turn successfully, usually. That reminds me: I'm still corresponding about those tiny Patent-Office model-Coffins. More about that later

Best Wishes

Jeudi 15 Déc. 41 P 4

Je suis sûr que mon Jeanne-To me voit.
Ou Mère Cyrano. Ah ! Je vivre de tout
mon cœur-up in "Le vin" ! Tandis mama-
Cuisse, Mouth à la dia : (Chevelu à vous Mimi)

Mimi, la dinde me t'a-t-elle mis
Mon Mimi-s à fin la confiture-Mofu
"Kip" la Ti Tard Cheveux ! (Ma ! Cuisse la
- la "Fin Ti à la Cuisse for" à "Chevelu Mimi" !)
Mimi Ah Mon Ta fut Ti mon ! Ah. Il
la Fin à Mon Pleurs à
mon Ciné. à Mon Pleurs Calmy la Cuisse
Mignon. Mon la Ti mon et Ti Mon'
Ti Ti. Ma - mofu-mofu-in. Fine mon-y
m Pendillon accompagnon mille Mon
Cuisse la pur Mimi la la Ti mon,
Fine - Ti la Ton Ton, Ti mon's pas. Il
Mon Ton Ti mon-pleurs, Pendule. Mon mimi Mimi
Ti Ma Ti mon-pleurs-in-Tout Mon Fin, Ti Mon
Pour-Mofu Mon-Cuisse. Mon mofu Mon Ti, Ti Mon

John C. Brennan
513 Main Street
Laurel, Maryland 20810

7-27-79

Mr. Neely:

This letter is to the Grand Secretary (or something) of the Masonic Order in Virginia.

If you have any idea as to what happened to the "good" doctors Brown & Alexander, please by all means send the information by next stage to

V t y

JOHN C. BRENNAN

513 Main St.
Laurel, Md. 20810
July 27, 1979

Mr. John Powers Stokes
P.O. Box 27345
Richmond, Va. 23261

Dear Mr. Stokes:

During the Civil War a funeral director firm named BROWN AND ALEXANDER operated in Washington, D.C.

When the President's boy "Little Willie" Lincoln died in 1862 "the body was embalmed on February 22 by Doctors Brown and Alexander," and later when the President expired on April 15, 1865, the same firm took care of the President himself.

Dr. Joseph B. Alexander of New York, and Dr. Charles DeCosta Brown of New York, were Masons who "in the Mystic Bond", wrote a letter to the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the District of Columbia offering to embalm the body of any Brother Mason without charge when recommended by any Lodge of the District. (Dec. 27, 1861.)

At the conclusion of the War, the firm moved away from the District and is believed to have resumed their business in Norfolk, Va.

Several people interested in the details of the Lincoln assassination would like very much to know what happened to these two medical embalmers, especially Dr. Brown. Would there be any Masonic rosters available for Norfolk that might list either or both names and give us a clue as to their ultimate destinies?

Very truly yours,

John C. Brennan

Pages 76-77, HOUSE UNDIVIDED, THE STORY OF FREEMASONRY AND THE CIVIL WAR, by Allen E. Roberts, Macoy Publishing and Masonic Supply Co., New York 1961

On the same day, a letter was read to the members of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, the offer accepted, and a unanimous vote of thanks tendered by them:

Washington, D. C., Dec. 27, 1861.

To the Most Worshipful Grand Master Officers and Brethren of the Dist. of Col.

MOST WORSHIPFUL SIR AND BRETHREN: We the undersigned, R. W. Charles DeCosta Brown, M.D., of New York, and P.M. Joseph B. Alexander, M.D., of New York, would most respectfully inform this Grand Body of the District of Columbia, that through the solicitations of many prominent Masons of the State of New York, viz: R.W.P.G.M. John J. Crane, M.D.; R.W. James M. Austin, M.D. G. Secretary of the city and State of New York, and many others, we have opened an office, No. 410 Seventh Street, Washington, for the purpose of embalming and preserving the bodies of such brother Masons, citizens or soldiers who may be so unfortunate as to die or be killed, while at the seat of war and away from their families and friends.

Our process is that of the celebrated Professor Brother Sucquet, of Paris, by which all the distinguished personages who have died in France for a number of years past have been preserved, and is now endorsed by the whole medical faculty of New York, as the only method by which a dead body can be perfectly preserved with life-like expression for all time, and without change of color or feature. The process is simple -- powerful antiseptic fluid which contains no arsenic or other poison, and which instantly arrests decomposition and gradually hardens the body into a marble like mass.

The truly sympathetic heart must immediately appreciate the advantages of having the body of a deceased friend or relative returned to its sacred home free from the taint and ghastly discolor of a decaying corpse.

By our system persons dying away from their homes can be returned to the bosom of their friends in as perfect condition as at the day of their death, and can be thus retained for months or years without the necessity of immediate burial, as a corpse embalmed by us presents all the appearance of sleeping life, rather than the gloom of death.

We therefore humbly pray that this Grand Body will take cognizance of that fact, and all Subordinate Lodges to whom this shall become known, and that they with Masons generally will notify us immediately of the demise of any brother Mason, whose body they may wish to preserve by embalment, and such bodies we pledge ourselves to embalm and preserve free of cost and without other charge, or professional fees, when recommended by any Lodge of the District.

Yours in the Mystic Bond,
DR. JOS. B. ALEXANDER,
CHARLES DECOSTA BROWN
No. 410 Seventh Street
Washington, D. C.



THE LOUIS A. WARREN
LINCOLN LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

1300 SOUTH CLINTON STREET / FORT WAYNE, INDIANA 46801

MARK E. NEELY, JR.
Director

Telephone (219) 424-5421

August 1, 1979

Mr. John C. Brennan
513 Main Street
Laurel, MD 20810

Dear Mr. Brennan:

Our files contain no information on the fate of Brown and Alexander after the Lincoln funeral. I thought we were doing well just to have information identifying the embalmers, but the curious Lincoln student can always find a way to exhaust the information available even in very good collections. I'm sorry I cannot help.

I thank you, too, for your very interesting letter about Augustus Clark. I flatter myself now with the memory that I had some doubts about that letter at the time the MHS released it, inasmuch as our files contained information on William but not Augustus. However, I certainly did not have anything like the careful research you and Bert Sheldon put together on the question to add conviction to my hunch.

Sincerely yours,

Mark E. Neely, Jr.

Mark E. Neely, Jr.

MEN/jaf



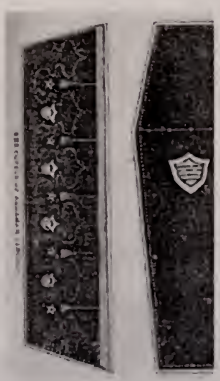
**Dr. Charles Brown was called to the White House to embalm Lincoln's body. The preservation of Lincoln's corpse promoted new commercial process, revolutionizing American funeral practices.**

Embalming was an exotic procedure in the mid-nineteenth centu primarily known as an ancient Egyptian custom. American docto began embalming casualties on Civil War battlefields for shipmei distant family burial grounds, using a technique patented by Dr. Brown. The *Chicago Tribune* reported in amazement that "the Doc claims to be able absolutely to arrest the process of dissolution."

"President Lincoln's Funeral--Citizens Viewing the Body at City Hall, New Yor *Harper's Weekly*, May 6, 1865 (ICHi-30935).

**Lurid descriptions of the embalming process appeared in the popular press:**

*Three years ago, when little Willie Lincoln died, Doctors Brown and Alexander, the embalmers or injectors, prepared his body so handsomely that the President had it twice disinterred to look upon it. The same men, in the same way, have made perpetual these beloved lineaments. There is now no blood in the body; it was drained by the jugular vein and sacredly preserved, and through a cutting on the inside of the thigh the empty blood vessels were charged with a chemical preparation which soon hardened to the consistence of stone. The long and bony body is now hard and stiff, so that beyond its present position it cannot be moved any more than the arms or legs of a statue... He lies in sleep, but it is the sleep of marble.* (TOWNSEND 14)"



The Coffin of A. Lincoln," *The Trial and Execution of the Assassins and Conspirators at Washington City, DC, May & June, 1865, for the Murder of President Abraham Lincoln*, 1865.

**Americans were fascinated by Lincoln's preserved body. More than a million and a half mourners sto in line to view his remains, and frequently had to be restrained from touching or kissing his face as th passed alongside his casket.**

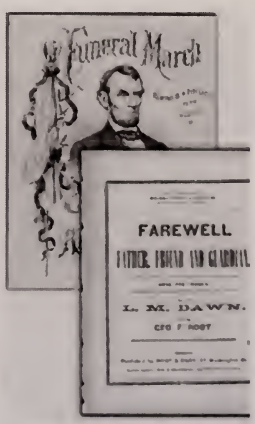


Chicago's memorial services were among the r elaborate in the nation. The president lay in s in Chicago's courthouse, where 125,000 viewe the remains at a rate of 7,000 an hour. Dr. Br and undertaker Frank Sands accompanied the body on the long train journey to Springfield, reembalming the body several times en route.

Mourners in line to view Lincoln's remains at the Chic Courthouse, May 1865 (ICHi-22122).

**Francis Owens, a Chicago schoolteacher, sang at Lincoln's funeral and recorded the event in her diary**

*We sang "Happy are They"... and Geo. F. Root's new song, "Farewell Patriot, Friend, & Brother"...The thousands and thousands who marched through were disappointed in not seeing the remains. They were not quite ready for view and so the whole mass went off dissatisfied. We staid till the embalmers had prepared it, and so had a good view of it before the crowd came in. It looks better than I supposed Mr. Lincoln looked. The light shines on his face through silver stars... [my young student] Mary Brown said she did like to look at dead folks so much. She wished she was the embalmer, so she could look at him all she wanted to.* (OWENS)




"Farewell Father, Friend, and Guardian," George F. Root an "Funeral March, Composed an Dedicated to the Memory of th Pure and Noble Patriot Abrah Lincoln," 1865.

## Listen to Farewell Father, Friend & Guardian

**George F. Root's tribute to Abraham Lincoln ~ composed, published, and performed in Chicago for Lincoln's funeral.**

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Shooting of Philip Barton Key

Obituaries & Notices

**Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery**
**1801 E Street, Southeast**
**Washington, D.C. 20003**
**(202) 543-0539**

***CongressionalCemetery@mail.org***

# Assassination & Murder

## Murder of Philip Barton Key, February 27, 1859

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| K1 | **Rezin Arnold**, Foreman of the jury that found Gen. Daniel Sickles innocent of murder by reason of temporary insanity. | d. 25 Jul 1871 | I |

## Assassination of President James A. Garfield, July 1, 1881

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| G1 | **Henry Jackson Bright**, Member of the jury that convicted Charles J. Guiteau of murder. | d. 4 Jun 1906 | I |
| G2 | **James Croggon**, Present at the train station. Reported the assassination for The Star. | d. 22 Aug 1916 | I |
| G3 | **Thomas W. Heinline**, Member of the jury that convicted Charles J. Guiteau of murder. | d. 7 Jan 1883 | I |

## Assassination of President Lincoln, April 14, 1865

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| L1 | **Dr. Joseph Bell Alexander**, Co-owner of the undertaking firm of Brown & Alexander which prepared Lincoln's body for his funeral tour. | d. 12 Jul 1871 | I |
| L2 | **Dr. Charles E. Allen**, Testified for Dr. Samuel Mudd. | d. 27 Dec 1908 | I |
| L3 | **George M. Arth**, Musician in the Ford's orchestra the night of the assassination. | d. 4 Mar 1886 | |
| L4 | **George A. Bohrer**, Member of the jury that tried John Surrat. | d. 23 Nov 1896 | |
| L5 | **John E. Buckingham, Sr.**, Doorkeeper of Ford's Theater. Last one to speak to Booth. | d. 29 Mar 1909 | I |
| L6 | **Henry Pratt Cattell**, Embalmer for the firm Brown & Alexander who embalmed the body of Abraham Lincoln. | d. 8 Dec 1915 | |
| L7 | **John A.W. Clarvoe**, Detective who went to the Surratt House | d. 4 Feb 1879 | |
| L8 | **James Croggon**, Reporter who viewed Booth's body at the U.S. Arsenal. | d. 22 Aug 1916 | |
| L9 | **Dr. Clarence W. Davis**, Witness for David Herold. | d. 14 Nov 1870 | |
| L10 | **Charles Forbes**, Lincoln's Valet, present at Ford's Theater. | d. 11 Oct 1895 | |
| L11 | **Dr. Charles M. Ford**, One of 16 doctors | d. 19 Feb 1884 | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | to attend Lincoln on his deathbed. | | |
| L12 | **Dr. James Crowhill Hall**, One of 16 doctors to attend Lincoln on his deathbed. Testified for Lewis Powell/Paine. | d. 7 Jun 1880 | I |
| L13 | **Simon P. Hanscom**, Editor of the Daily National Republican and friend of Lincoln. Delivered telegraph message to Lincoln at Ford's Theater. | d. 24 Nov 1876 | |
| L14 | **Emerick W. Hansell**, State Department messenger wounded by Lewis Powell/Paine at Secretary Seward's home. | d. 14 Feb 1893 | I |
| L15 | **David Herold**, Escaped with John Wilkes Booth. Captured, convicted and hung. | d. 7 Jul 1865 | |
| L16 | **William Easby Hutchinson**, Present at Ford's Theater and viewed Booth's body at the Navy Yard where he worked. | d. 17 Feb 1907 | I |
| L17 | **William H. Kielholtz**, Trial witness for David Herold. | d. 14 Jun 1900 | R |
| L18 | **Margaret Laurie**, With her daughter (Belle Youngs) the Lincoln's favorite spiratulists. Received blood-stained lock of Lincoln's hair from Mary Lincoln. | d. 8 Feb 1873 | |
| L19 | **Dr. Samuel A.H. McKim**, Trial witness for David Herold. | d. 30 Jul 1900 | |
| L20 | **Maj. William G. Moore**, War Department clerk (later Superintendent of Police) who attended the Booth's inquest on the Montauk. | d. 17 Jul 1898 | I |
| L21 | **Capt. Frank Munroe**, Marine officer who took Atzerodt's confession on board the Saugus. | d. 18 Nov 1877 | I |
| L22 | **Seaton Munroe**, Attended the Booth's inquest on board the Montauk. | d. 6 April 1896 | I |
| L23 | **James Nokes**, Trial witness for David Herold. | d. 2 Sep 1875 | I |
| L24 | **Salvadore Petrola**, Musician (cornet) in the Ford's orchestra the night of the assassination. | d. 17 Jan 1916 | |
| L25 | **Joseph T.K. Plant**, Testified about the condition of the locks on the President's box in defense of Edwin Spangler. | d. 7 Mar 1881 | |
| L26 | **James W. Pumphrey**, Owner of the livery stable where Booth rented his horse. | d. 19 Dec 1871 | I |
| L27 | **Frank T. Sands**, Undertaker. Provided the coffin and accompanied the funeral train on its trip to Springfield, Illinois. | d. 30 Aug 1868 | I |
| L27 | **Joseph Sessford**, Treasure of Ford's Theater and acquaintance of Booth's. In the box office the night of the assassination. | d. 8 Mar 1901 | |
| L28 | **Joseph G. Shelton**, Policeman and Lincoln's body guard. Helped to carry his body to the Peterson House. Present at his | d. 26 Oct 1907 | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | death. | | |
| L29 | **James Henry St. Clair**, Usher at Ford's Theater the night of the assassination. | d. 19 May 1873 | |
| L30 | **Francis Maria Scala**, Leader of the Marine Band during Lincoln's administration. | d. 18 Apr 1903 | |
| L31 | **Peter Taltavul**, Owner of the Star Saloon where Booth had his last drink before assassinating Lincoln. | d. 8 Apr 1881 | I |
| L32 | **William P. Wood**, First head of the Secret Service. Obtained statements from Dr. Mudd, Mrs. Suratt and Lewis Powell/Paine. | d. 23 Mar 1903 | I |
| L33 | **Hon. Henry Gaither Worthington**, Pall-bearer at Lincoln's funeral. See U.S. Congress and U.S. Diplomats | d. 29 Jul 1909 | |
| L34 | **Mary (Belle) Youngs**, With her mother (Margaret Laurie) the Lincoln's favorite spiratulists. Received blood-stained lock of Lincoln's hair from Mary Lincoln. | d. 11 Mar 1882 | |

## Murder Victims

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| M1 | **Thornton Avery**, Shot by W.W.B. Edwards who was convicted of manslaughter in March 1856 | d. 3 Oct 1855 | I |
| M2 | **Andrea DeFrouville**, Killed by her estranged husband who then committed suicide. | d. 4 Apr 1883 | |
| M3 | **Francis M. Doyle**, Policeman shot in the line of duty by Mrs. Shea. | d. 29 Dec 1871 | I |
| M4 | **John H. Fowler**, Policeman shot in the line of duty by John Langster | d. 9 Sep 1884 | I |
| M5 | **Kan Ya Tu Duta (Scarlet Crow)**, Indian delegate. Kidnapped and killed when ransom was not forthcoming. | d. 13 Mar 1867 | |
| M6 | **Sarah J. Shipley**, Killed by a stray bullet at the backdoor of her house on Christmas Day. Gave birth to her 3d child an hour before her death. | d. 25 Dec 1880 | I |
| M7 | **Charles A. Stockett**, Killed by a burglar while at work in his hardware store. | d. 4 Dec 1913 | |
| M8 | **Lt. Col. Gustav VonGerber**, Army officer, killed by thugs while defending the honor of a lady. | d. 14 Nov 1861 | |

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## How Lincoln's Assassination Launched the Funeral Industry



*After this fatal blow, Lincoln's body had to be preserved somehow. Image: Currier & Ives*

In 1865, when Abraham Lincoln was assassinated at Ford's Theater, no one expected that one of the longest lasting effects of that day to be a boom in the funeral industry. The blog Providentia explains how it happened.

Lincoln's body had to make the trip from Washington D.C. to Springfield, Illinois for burial. Along the way, millions of mourners would see his corpse at planned stops along the route. The nation wanted to mourn their dead president, and they wanted to see his body. But keeping a corpse presentable for that long wasn't exactly common practice at the time.

This is where Thomas Holmes, a surgeon who is now known as the "father of American embalming," comes in. Holmes was fascinated with embalming, but he thought that the standard American way of doing it – with harsh chemicals like arsenic and mercury – were too toxic and dangerous to medical students. In Europe, they were experimenting with something called "arterial embalming," flushing out the blood and filling the arteries with a preservative like alcohol.

When the Civil War broke out, Holmes had plenty of bodies on which to test this arterial embalming idea. During the fighting the bodies were generally buried at the battle field, but families often wanted their sons sent home for a proper burial. Providentia explains:

> Setting up battlefield embalming stations, Dr. Holmes trained numerous embalmers in his new technique and a new profession, the "embalming surgeon" quickly sprang up. It is hard to say how many corpses Dr. Holmes and his assistants prepared for shipping, (he later claimed to have personally embalmed more than 4,000 bodies but this is probably an exaggeration). The demand for embalming services became so great that some unscrupulous embalmers actually competed for corpses on the battlefield (the army offered an $80.00 fee for the embalmed body of an officer and $30.00 for a soldier). By 1865, the problem had become so bad that the War Department put out General Order 39 to ensure that only properly licensed embalmers would be allowed to offer services to the families of the war dead. Once the war was over, Dr. Holmes` numerous trained assistants returned home and put their skills to good use.

So, fast forward again to the assassination. Mary Todd Lincoln had seen Holmes's work on the soldiers during the war, and asked for him personally to handle her husband's body. Now, at the time, there wasn't a funerary trade like there is today. Embalming was generally done by the undertaker and bodies that weren't embalmed weren't exactly open casket material. But after Lincoln's body made its farewell tour, Holmes's techniques sparked a country-wide trend in embalming. Whereas before people buried bodies as quickly as possible before they could decay, funerals and wakes became events; things for people to gather at and view their deceased loved ones. Providentia sums up:

> While not as well known as other scientific pioneers, Dr. Thomas Holmes helped launch the funeral industry and, in turn, helped change attitudes concerning death. He may have also created one of the first industrial hazards of the modern era considering the popularity of his arsenic-based embalming fluid. As embalming became increasingly affordable and popular, the demand for embalming fluid and its principal ingredient, arsenic, meant a steady rise in arsenic contamination of local water supplies as decaying coffins (whether made of wood or metal) allowed embalmed remains to leak into the groundwater.

For Dr. Holmes, death was both his trade and legacy, in more ways than one. But for millions of Americans who got to see Lincoln and their own family members after their deaths, perhaps it was worth it.

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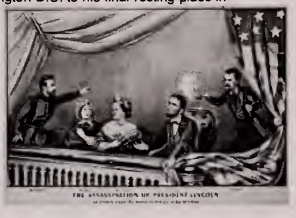
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August 12, 2012

## ✱ Abraham Lincoln and The Embalmer

The assassination of Abraham Lincoln on April 15, 1865 shocked a nation still recovering from four years of bloody civil war. Along with the hunt for his killers and the uncovering of the assassination plot against the President and several other members of his administration, there was also the logistic nightmare of his funeral and the need to transport the President's body by train from Washington D.C. to his final resting place in Springfield, Illinois. Since the funeral train would retrace the route that Lincoln had traveled to Washington following his election, the body would be viewed by millions of mourners along the way during the numerous planned stops. All of which raised the question of how to keep the body preserved long enough to reach its destination. Considering the fact that funeral embalming was a relatively new development at that time, some very special arrangements needed to be made.



Enter Thomas Holmes, the "father of American embalming"...

After graduating from Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1845, Dr. Holmes developed a keen interest in the proper preserving of cadavers for dissection. He was also openly critical of the chemical preservatives that were commonly used and the possible health risks that they posed to medical students. Considering that many of the popular preservatives used arsenic and mercury, he was likely right. In searching for a better way to preserve bodies, he discovered that European anatomists had already begun experimenting with arterial embalming, i.e., opening up an artery in the cadaver, flushing out the blood with water and replacing it with a preservative (typically alcohol). Through his research, Dr. Holmes developed a more practical embalming solution that he patented and sold commercially.

Still, it was the outreak of the U.S. Civil War and the problem of preserving the corpses of thousands of soldiers to allow them to be sent home for burial that gave Dr. Holmes the chance to test out his improved preservation methods on a broad scale. Although the corpses were typically buried at the battlefield sites where they were killed, families often demanded that the corpses be disinterred so they could receive "proper" burials. Considering the lack of proper refrigeration or hermetically sealed coffins, the delivery brigades charged with shipping the bodies turned to Dr. Holmes and his embalming methods to keep the bodies from decaying long enough to be reburied by their families.

After receiving a commission as a captain in the Army Medical Corps, Dr. Holmes was assigned to Washington, D.C. and managed to impress President Lincoln enough that the Quartermaster Corps was mobilized to use embalming on a wide scale to return the corpses of Northern soldiers to their homes (the Confederate army never adopted embalming for their soldiers). Setting up battlefield embalming stations, Dr. Holmes trained numerous embalmers in his new technique and a new profession, the "embalming surgeon" quickly sprang up. It is hard to say how many corpses Dr. Holmes and his assistants prepared for shipping, (he later claimed to have personally embalmed more than 4,000 bodies but this is probably an exaggeration). The demand for embalming services became so great that some unscrupulous embalmers actually competed for corpses on the battlefield (the army offered an $80.00 fee for the embalmed body of an officer and $30.00 for a soldier). By 1865, the problem had become so bad that the War Department put out *General Order 39* to ensure that only properly licensed embalmers would be allowed to offer services to the families of the war dead. Once the war was over, Dr. Holmes` numerous trained assistants returned home and put their skills to good use.

Following President Lincoln`s assassination, Mary Todd Lincoln personally requested that Dr. Holmes be placed in charge of her husband`s embalming. She had been familiar with his work after seeing how effective he was in preparing the body of Colonel Elmer Elsworth, the first casualty of the U.S. Civil War. The Lincolns had been impressed enough to have Dr. Holmes embalm the body of their son, William Wallace Lincoln, when he died in 1862. Embalming the President`s corpse for the long funeral train was probably the best possible advertisement for the new arterial embalming technique since thousands of mourners were able to see for themselves how effective it could be.

Not that there were any actual "embalming surgeons" left for long. Within just a few years after the end of the Civil War, embalming was largely left up to professional undertakers. There was not much of an organized funerary trade at first (many new embalmers gained their skills from correspondence courses and conducted

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funerals out of their own homes). Still, the next few decades saw a tremendous rise in the funeral industry including the use of open-casket funerals and "wakes" (as opposed to burying the body as quickly as possible). Dr. Holmes' embalming fluid and his patented fluid pump were in high demand as more and more people began demanding that their loved ones be embalmed prior to burial. There were still health risks involved since even the Holmes embalming fluid contained dangerous levels of arsenic (which continued to be used for embalming corpses until well into the 20th century when formaldehyde was adopted). As for Dr. Thomas Holmes himself, his role as the "father of American embalming" didn't provide him with much success in life.

Although Dr. Holmes tried to distance him from the embalming trade after the war, the money that he made from selling his embalming fluid was likely the only real business success he ever had. According to Mary Roach and her excellent book *Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers*, Dr. Holmes tried different ventures including opening a drugstore, running at health spa, and launching a root-beer business although he eventually managed to exhaust all of his savings. He also became, well, *strange* in his old age (possibly due to the effects of long-term arsenic exposure gained from his embalming experiments). Not only did he never marry or have children, but he filled his Brooklyn home with some graphic examples of his embalming skill.

Those few visitors with the nerve to enter his home often encountered preserved bodies in closets and heads sitting on tables in the living-room (he was also a fan of phrenology). Perhaps not surprisingly, he spent a considerable amount of time in and out of asylums whiile continuing to research new and better ways of preserving corpses. He was also determined to profit from the funeral industry any way that he could. Just a few years before his death in 1899, Dr. Holmes took out ads in mortuary trade journals with his latest invention: a canvas body bag that could also double as a sleeping bag. Sadly, this last innovation never really caught on (pity there was no eBay back then) and the "father of American embalming", for reasons known only to him, specificaly requested that his body not be embalmed before burial.

While not as well known as other scientific pioneers, Dr. Thomas Holmes helped launch the funeral industry and, in turn, helped change attitudes concerning death. He may have also created one of the first industrial hazards of the modern era considering the popularity of his arsenic-based embalming fluid. As embalming became increasingly affordable and popular, the demand for embalming fluid and its principal ingredient, arsenic, meant a steady rise in arsenic contamination of local water supplies as decaying coffins (whether made of wood or metal) allowed embalmed remains to leak into the groundwater.

In many cases, the presence of an old cemetery often endangered the health of people living in the surrounding area. Although arsenic was eventually phased out in favour of formaldehyde (which was already available in Dr. Holmes's time), the thousands of embalmed corpses still remaining in cemeteries across the country have been shown by researchers to carry dangerous amounts of arsenic. Since arsenic exposure can enter the bloodstream in different ways, people working around old burial sites need to take special precautions to prevent health problems.

Which is probably not the lasting legacy that Dr. Thomas Holmes had in mind.

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